

## **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

### **Consultant to Conduct an AI Tools Readiness Assessment & Roadmap**

Issue Date: Friday, November 28, 2025

Closing Date: Friday, December 12, 2025

## **Introduction**

The Ontario Centre of Innovation (OCI) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to conduct an AI Tools Readiness Assessment and develop a practical roadmap to guide OCI's early adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

The goal of this engagement is to help OCI identify high-value, low-risk AI opportunities that can enhance organizational effectiveness, improve service delivery, and support operational efficiency while ensuring responsible governance, data security, and alignment with OCI's mission and public-sector obligations.

The consultant will collaborate closely with OCI's management team and an internal AI working group throughout the engagement, providing clear, evidence-based recommendations and actionable next steps. The consultant will provide bi-weekly progress updates via email and participate in monthly check-in meetings.

## **Background**

For over 38 years, OCI has been a central pillar of Ontario's innovation ecosystem, bringing together industry, academic, and government partners to co-invest in R&D, technology development, and commercialization opportunities that generate outcomes for Ontarians through job creation, incremental sales, and investment.

OCI is a non-profit organization funded by the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada.

Website: [www.oc-innovation.ca](http://www.oc-innovation.ca)

## **Scope of Work**

The selected consultant will deliver a focused assessment and roadmap that identifies where and how OCI can effectively and responsibly introduce AI tools into its operations. The engagement will emphasize discovery, opportunity identification, readiness assessment, and a clear path forward.

### **1. Discovery & Current-State Overview**

- Review OCI's core business processes, digital tools, and relevant workflows.
- Conduct targeted discussions and/or focus groups with OCI leadership, select staff and stakeholders to understand operational needs, data maturity, and current challenges.
- Identify ongoing or planned technology or data initiatives relevant to AI use.

### **2. Opportunity Identification**

- Facilitate structured discussions to identify potential AI use cases (e.g., document summarization, data synthesis, research assistance, stakeholder communications, or administrative automation).
- Assess each opportunity's potential impact, feasibility, and risks.

- Develop and apply a simple, transparent scoring framework (e.g., impact, feasibility, risk, data readiness) to evaluate and prioritize identified AI use cases and produce a shortlist of 3–7 high-impact, low-risk opportunities suitable for phased exploration or pilot testing.
- Provide an AI use-case catalogue (e.g., spreadsheet) listing all identified opportunities, with basic metadata (description, owner, impact, feasibility, risk, data needs, status).

### **3. Readiness & Risk Considerations**

- Evaluate OCI's readiness across key dimensions: data quality and accessibility, privacy and security, digital skills, and governance.
- Identify key gaps, risks, or barriers to AI implementation, key ethical, legal, and reputational considerations related to AI use in a public-sector, innovation-focused context, and recommend practical controls to address them.
- Recommend responsible-AI principles and usage guidelines tailored to OCI's context, including data-handling and security safeguards.

### **4. AI Implementation Roadmap**

- Develop a concise, 6–18 month roadmap summarizing recommended actions, phases, and sequencing for early AI adoption.
- Include options for “quick-win” pilot activities and low-cost implementation steps.
- Outline key roles, dependencies, and considerations for successful adoption.

### **5. Report & Presentation**

- Deliver a written report summarizing findings, readiness insights, opportunities, and roadmap.
- Provide a slide deck and executive summary suitable for management level discussions.
- Present findings and recommendations in a 2-hour virtual or in-person session, with one follow-up session.

### **7. The following are out of scope for this engagement:**

- Building or configuring production AI systems or integrations.
- Custom software development beyond prototypes or mock-ups.

### **Key Deliverables**

The consultant will provide the following deliverables:

#### **1. AI Readiness Assessment Report and Roadmap**

- A written report describing OCI's current state of AI readiness, identified opportunities, risks, and practical recommendations.
- A short-term (6–18 month) roadmap outlining recommended phases, priority actions, and next steps for AI adoption.

#### **2. Summary Slide Deck**

- A presentation deck highlighting key findings, opportunities, and roadmap recommendations.
- Accompanying 1-2 page executive summary written for senior leadership.

### 3. Presentation of Key Findings

- Up to 2-hour virtual or in-person presentation summarizing insights, recommendations, and next steps.
- Up to one follow-up Q&A session (virtual or in person) to clarify recommendations.

### Consultant Qualifications

The ideal consultant will demonstrate:

- Experience assessing AI readiness or digital transformation opportunities for public-sector or non-profit organizations.
- Knowledge of data governance, privacy, and security requirements in a Canadian context.
- Familiarity with AI productivity, analytics, or knowledge-management tools relevant to organizational operations.
- Strong facilitation and communication skills, including the ability to translate technical concepts into practical recommendations.
- Vendor neutrality and objectivity in evaluating AI solutions or platforms.
- Experience with change management and stakeholder adoption.
- Experience with responsible AI/AI governance frameworks.

### Proposal Requirements

Please include the following in your submission:

#### 1. Proponent Information

- Company name and contact details.
- Project lead and any team members with short bios highlighting relevant experience.

#### 2. Relevant Experience

- Examples of comparable AI strategy, technology readiness, or innovation consulting projects.
- Client list or case studies (if applicable).

#### 3. Approach & Workplan

- Description of proposed methodology (e.g., discovery, analysis, recommendations).
- Expected timeline.

#### 4. Deliverables & Outputs

- Outline of key deliverables as described above, noting any suggested enhancements.

#### 5. Pricing

- Provide a fixed-fee quote (in CAD) with a short breakdown by phase or deliverable.
- Identify any assumptions (e.g., number of interviews, virtual vs. on-site sessions).

#### 6. References

- At least two client references for comparable work (name, title, organization, email, phone).

### Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following weighted criteria:

- Experience and qualifications (40%)
- Proposed approach and methodology, including ability to meet timelines (30%)
- Cost effectiveness (30%)

OCI may request interviews with shortlisted proponents.

### Timeline

- Proposal submission deadline by **4:00 p.m. EST, Friday, December 12, 2025.**
- Selection of consultant: End of December
- Project commencement (kick-off): January 2026

(OCI reserves the right to adjust this schedule.)

### Subsequent Contract Terms and Conditions

- OCI reserves the right to award all, partial, or none of this solicitation.
- This RFP does not create an employment relationship. Individuals performing services required by the contract are not employees of OCI, are not eligible for OCI employee benefits, and remain employees/contractors of the vendor.
- Any changes to scope and associated costs after contract execution must be submitted in writing and are subject to OCI approval.
- Travel and travel reimbursement are not authorized for this acquisition.
- Invoicing: Vendor will be paid upon submission of proper invoices at the prices stipulated in the contract.
- **Confidentiality & Data Security:** Vendor must maintain confidentiality of all OCI information and Board responses; store data securely in accordance with applicable Ontario requirements; and ensure appropriate anonymization/aggregation in reporting.
- **Compliance:** Vendor must comply with applicable NIST aligned cybersecurity standards and OCI's Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) and Data Policy.
- **Ownership:** OCI will own the final deliverables and presentation materials.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Proponents must disclose any actual or perceived conflicts.
- **Success Criteria:** Timely delivery of all phases, actionable recommendations aligned with OCI's mission, and stakeholder satisfaction with clarity and practicality of outputs.

### Use of AI Tools in Delivery:

Any use of AI tools or services by the vendor in delivering this engagement must:

- Comply with OCI's Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Policy.
- Not transmit non-public OCI data to publicly accessible AI services without OCI's prior written consent; and
- Be disclosed in the vendor's proposal, including how outputs will be validated.

### Submission Instructions & Contact Information

Proposals are required via email on or before 4 pm EST Friday, December 12, 2025, to:

Carmela Mendoza  
Administrative Coordinator  
Ontario Centre of Innovation  
[cmendoza@oc-innovation.ca](mailto:cmendoza@oc-innovation.ca)

*All bids will be acknowledged with a return receipt.*

Questions may be addressed via email to Carmela Mendoza at [cmendoza@oc-innovation.ca](mailto:cmendoza@oc-innovation.ca). Responses may or may not be shared with all potential bidders.

**Confidentiality:** All information provided by or obtained from OCI in any form in connection with this RFP, including any intellectual property information is the sole property of OCI and must be treated as confidential.